

## Dosimetry Update

Our current dosimetry badge provider, Proxtronics, recently merged their dosimetry division with Global Dosimetry Solutions, Inc. The management of USDA dosimetry accounts will be transferred to Global in January. Every effort is being taken to make this a smooth transition for our dosimetry users.

Our new dosimetry badge provider, Global Dosimetry Solutions, Inc., will issue next quarter's badges in January. You will mail your current badges back to our previous provider, Proxtronics, not Global. A mailing label addressed to Proxtronics will be included with your new badges. Please be sure to mail your badges back to Proxtronics before March 31, 2005. Badges returned after that date will not be accepted by Proxtronics. RSS will be charged \$35.00 for each badge that is not returned.

If you have any questions concerning this transition, please feel free to call the Radiation Safety Staff office at 301-504-2440.



## RSS Under New Management

The Radiation Safety Staff has been transferred to the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM.) To reflect our responsibility for Department-wide radiation safety programs, RSS was moved from the Agricultural Research Service and placed under the Assistant Secretary for Administration in the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) - Safety, Health, and Employee Welfare Division (SHEWD) in 1996. During a recent reorganization of OHRM and change in emphasis for SHEWD, the Assistant Secretary for Administration decided that OPPM, with its hazardous materials management responsibility, was the best place for RSS. OPPM, which is also part of Departmental Administration under the Assistant Secretary for Administration, is led by Russ Ashworth, Director. RSS looks forward to working in its new organization and continuing its commitment to the safe use of radiation and effective radiation safety programs throughout USDA.

## X-Ray Fluorescence Analyzers



This is a reminder to Forest Service personnel, that bulk sample x-ray fluorescence analyzers, used to analyze soil for heavy metals, contain significant radioactive sources. They must be registered with the Radiation Safety Staff and listed on a permit. Please spread the word to coworkers, who may be interested in acquiring one of these devices, to contact this office.

## LRPO / Irradiator Operator Course Planned for June 2005

Once again the RSS is presenting the LRPO / Irradiator Operator course. It will be held June 6-10, 2005 in College Station, Texas. As in the past, all lodging and per diem expenses will be covered by our training contract. Additional information and the application can be found under the training link on the RSS web site ([www.rss.usda.gov](http://www.rss.usda.gov)).

## RSMS Update

We've been telling you for quite some time that a new Radiation Safety Management System (RSMS) is in the making; well, now we're at the finish line. We will convert the data from the old DOS-based system to the new Web-based system during the first weeks of January. Once the verification of the data takes place, the new system will be ready for use. Our office will be the initial user of the system, to ensure all the bugs have been worked out. We anticipate releasing it to the field in early Spring.

What does this mean to you? All of the correspondence and requests you currently mail to us for action will be available at your fingertips. You will be able to log on with a user-id and password and instantaneously request an increase in your possession limit, approval for a new room, the addition of an associate user, or whatever you like. Your request will be approved by the system or in some instances, routed to a Health Physicist for review and approval. The new system will provide you with more accessibility. However, our staff will still be available to assist you in any matter.

In the interim, to assist us, please be sure to review your records at your location. If you do not have a copy of any document, don't hesitate to contact Katina Jones. Retention guidelines for your records can be found in Section 6 of the Radiation Safety Handbook. Please be sure to return all of the documents we currently send to you by the requested deadlines. Additionally, we may be

in contact with you to confirm certain aspects of your program and your radiation use permit. Your assistance during this transition will be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, regarding the new RSMS, contact Katina Jones.

## DOT Transportation Guidelines

Permit holders with portable nuclear gauges must operate under the Department of Transportation (DOT) which regulates the transport of radioactive material. The transport of a nuclear gauge requires a DOT-prescribed transportation document as well as "emergency response guidelines" for radioactive sealed sources, such as may be contained in a nuclear gauge. Recently, the DOT has changed its description of radioactive sealed sources from the old designation: "radioactive material, special form, n.o.s. un2974," to a new designation: "radioactive material, special form, 7, un3332." This revised designation must appear on the DOT transportation paper for each nuclear gauge. If you need assistance in acquiring an update to this document, contact this office, The USDA Radiation Staff, for assistance.

## Unused C-14 Compounds Available

The ARS, Western Regional Research Center, Albany, CA has four vials of unused, unopened C-14 fatty acids that are excess to their needs. These were purchased in 2001. If you are interested in obtaining any of these items, please contact Anna Korn at her email: [annakorn@pw.usda.gov](mailto:annakorn@pw.usda.gov).

The descriptions are as follows:

- 250uCi U-14C Palmitic Acid in toluene from Amersham Pharmacia, catalog #CFB37-250uCi
- 50uCi 1-14C Lauric Acid in hexane from Amersham Pharmacia, catalog #CFA106-50uCi
- 50uCi 1-14C Oleic Acid in toluene from Amersham Pharmacia, catalog #CFA243-50uCi
- 50uCi 1-14C Stearic Acid in toluene from Amersham Pharmacia, catalog #CFA24-50uCi

RSS will work with both locations to assure that the materials are shipped properly.

## How to Contact the Radiation Safety Staff

Mailing Address: USDA

Radiation Safety Staff

5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5510

Beltsville, MD 20705

Phone Number: 301-504-2440 Fax Number: 301-504-2450

Web Site: [www.rss.usda.gov](http://www.rss.usda.gov)

# Annual Radiation Safety Audit

An important part of our radiation safety program is the annual audit that is performed by the Location Radiation Protection Officer. The audit is a review of your location's use of radioactive materials, radiation sources and management of your radiation safety program requirements. With that in mind, let's look at what an audit should cover.

**Security:** Adequate security is always a major concern. One of the most important aspects of an audit is walking around and looking at how security is implemented. Ensure that radioactive materials are not left unattended in laboratories where no authorized users are present. Ensure that refrigerators (where radioactive material is stored) and radioactive waste disposal containers are locked to prevent unauthorized access. Are there any improvements or changes that need to be made?

**Radiation Source Use Permits:** LRPO's should have a separate copy of the Use Permits that are active at their location. Ensure all the information is current. Do the isotopes and total activity amount of radio-labeled chemicals agree with what is listed on the permit? Do the isotope, activity, and make and model numbers on sealed source devices match what is listed on the permit? Do the make and model numbers on x-ray units match what is listed on

the permit? Is the Associate User list accurate? Ensure that permit holders have only the radioisotopes and amounts that are approved on their permits. Are the rooms accurately listed and described?

**Inventory:** Ensure that each item possessed by a permit holder has been approved by RSS (there should be an RSS receipt record for each item or you can review the RSS inventory. Ask RSS for a list of the inventory items for your location.)

**Instrument Calibration:** Are the survey instruments used by the permit holders properly calibrated? Are the annual calibration certificates available for the last three years?

**Leak Test Records:** Have permit holders (with sealed sources) submitted their leak tests in a timely manner this year? Are the records available for the last three years?

**Monthly Surveys:** Have users of unsealed radioactive materials performed monthly (or weekly, based on the amount used) radiation surveys? Are they filed in an orderly manner? Are the records available for the last three years?

**Dosimetry:** Ensure that people who need to wear film badges (irradiator and nuclear gauge operators) are receiving them through the RSS vendor and that they wear them when they use the radioactive sources. Are you receiving badges for people who no longer work there? Do people who are not required to wear film badges (those who use only small amounts of radio-labeled

chemicals and other small sources, such as electron capture detectors) receive badges? Film badges can be cancelled by contacting RSS.

**Training:** Is user training up-to-date? Nuclear gauge users need refresher training every three years. Others, including ancillary staff, may need refresher training. Are the location's training records up-to-date?

**Waste Disposal:** Ensure that stored waste containers are labeled with the radioactive material and amounts. Are disposal records up-to-date and properly filed?

Once the audit is completed:

- 1) Document what you did (visited laboratories, interviewed laboratory personnel, reviewed records, took radiation level surveys);
- 2) Identify the problems, describe the problems you found (radioactive waste container not locked or secured, records of laboratory surveys not maintained);
- 3) Identify the actions the permit holder took to fix the problem (placed lock on waste container, implemented filing procedures for laboratory surveys);
- 4) Discuss the results with the location manager (support from management is vital to a good radiation safety program.) Make sure the location manager gets a copy of your audit and keep a copy for review by RSS when we come out to inspect your facility.

If you have any questions regarding the LRPO audit, please call RSS and let us help.

# 2005 Schedule of Programs

## Quarterly Lab Survey Schedule

Quarterly Report Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle	January 18, 2005	February 25, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Cycle	April 18, 2005	May 20, 2005
3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle	July 18, 2005	August 19, 2005
4 <sup>th</sup> Cycle	October 17, 2005	November 18, 2005

## Associate Users Audit

Year	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
2005	June 6, 2005	July 8, 2005

## Leak Test Schedule

Mailout Cycle	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Leak Test	January 18, 2005	February 25, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Leak Test	July 18, 2005	August 19, 2005

## X-Ray Producing Equipment Annual Inventory Audit

Year	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
2005	June 6, 2005	July 8, 2005

## Sealed Source Inventory Audit

Audit Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	February 7, 2005	March 11, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	August 8, 2005	September 9, 2005

## Irradiator Survey

Survey Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Survey	January 18, 2005	February 18, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Survey	July 8, 2005	August 12, 2005

## LRPO Radioactive Waste Manifests

Survey Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Survey	February 7, 2005	March 11, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Survey	August 8, 2005	September 9, 2005

## Incineration Report

Audit Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	February 14, 2005	March 18, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	May 9, 2005	June 10, 2005
3 <sup>rd</sup> Inventory Audit	August 8, 2005	September 9, 2005
4 <sup>th</sup> Inventory Audit	November 14, 2005	December 16, 2005

## Unsealed Inventory

Inventory Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	April 4, 2005	May 6, 2005
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	September 6, 2005	October 7, 2005